WELCOA ONLINE BULLETINS

BetterSafe!

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

Are You Ergonomically Correct?

Creating A Supportive Environment

Coming To Your Senses

Vision—If you are having trouble with your vision you are not alone. One in four adult computer users in the United States have difficulty with their sight. Making sure that your computer monitor is at or below eye level is only the first step in enhancing your vision. You can make many other adjustments that will lessen the strain on your eyes.

- *Consider the lighting in your workspace. Bright lights or sunlight that shines directly on your screen may make it difficult to see your work. Instead, try to have rows of light that run parallel to your view of the screen.*
- *To help decrease the glare from incoming sunlight, place your monitor perpendicular to the window or adjust the blinds.*
- *An adjustable desk lamp with an angled shade can focus additional light on tasks that require reading and writing, while not increasing glare on your monitor.*

Your computer's operating system provides a number of options, usually called "accessibility features" or "universal access" features depending on which system you are using. These features will allow you to adjust:

- *The size and color of text*
- *The size of items on your desktop*
- *The size of title bars, and menus*
- *A number of other features*

Your program may also have tools such as a magnifier that allows you to run the mouse over a selection and see it magnified to a size of your choice in a small viewing window that appears at the top of the page.

In addition to these self-adjustments, there are additional products that magnify, have voice or sound outputs rather than visual outputs, provide contrast, lessen glare on your screen and have big text or numbers with markings that you can feel with your hands.

Wellness Council of America
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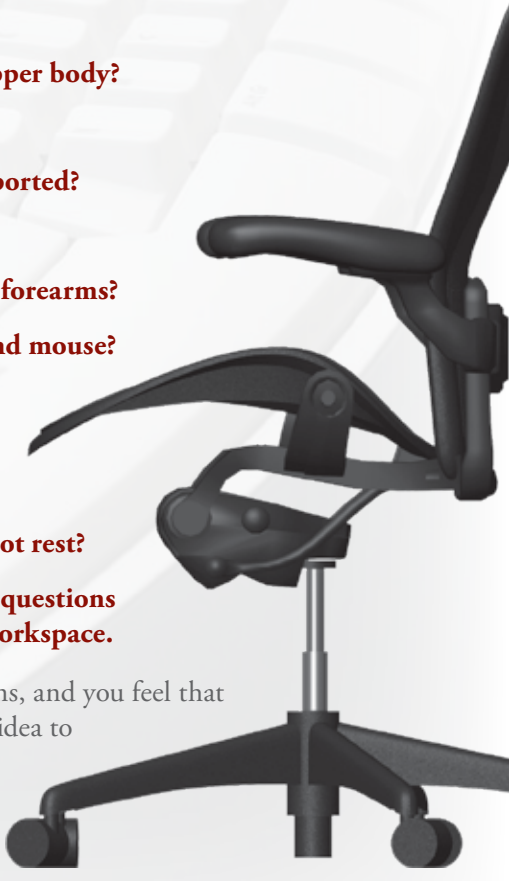
Do you use a computer on the job? Two-thirds of our country would answer "yes" to this question. In today's high-tech work environment you must not only know how to use technology, but you should also know how to design your workstation to avoid injury. Ergonomics is the science of office equipment design that enables you to work with less pain and tiredness. These small changes will allow you to accomplish your tasks throughout the day. Sometimes people who have been in the workforce for a number of years develop motion or joint injuries. These injuries result from doing the same thing again and again or sitting and using a computer on a daily basis.

Making Your Workstation Work For You

The best workstation is one that allows your body to be in a neutral position. This posture allows your joints to naturally align so that there is no added stress on your body. By lowering the stress on your body you will be able to work more comfortably, and reduce the likelihood of future injuries. To determine if your workstation allows you to work in a neutral position ask yourself these ten questions:

1. **Is the top of my computer monitor at or just below my eye level and at least 20 inches away?**
2. **Does my head and neck align with my upper body?**
3. **Are my shoulders relaxed?**
4. **Are my elbows close to my body and supported?**
5. **Does my chair support my lower back?**
6. **Do my wrists and hands line up with my forearms?**
7. **Is there enough room for my keyboard and mouse?**
8. **Is the keyboard directly in front of me?**
9. **Are my thighs and hips supported by a cushioned chair and parallel to the floor?**
10. **Are my feet supported by the floor or a foot rest?**
11. **If you answered "no" to any of the above questions you may need to make changes to your workspace.**



Even if you answered "yes" to the above questions, and you feel that your workspace fits your needs, it is still a good idea to change your work position several times a day. If you have an adjustable chair, make small changes to your chair or backrest until you feel comfortable. If your furniture is not adjustable take little breaks and walk around for a few minutes. Stretch your fingers, hands, arms and upper body.

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You Are What You Eat Now Move Those Feet!

By Mike Perko, PhD

I've heard it said that to burn off the calories in one M&M candy, you would have to walk the length of a football field. I can't prove this, nor can I honestly say I've ever eaten just one M&M, ever. But it got me thinking about the amount of exercise it would take to burn off foods that we eat. Using walking as the measure of exercise, the Nutrition Council of Cincinnati suggests the following. This calculation is based off a 150 lb. person walking 3 mph (20 minute mile). Thus, if you want to burn off the following foods, you'll have to walk:

1 piece chocolate cake (425 calories) ..... 82 minutes (about 8200 steps*)
1 Snickers bar (280 calories)..... 54 minutes (about 5400 steps)
1½ oz. bag of potato chips (225 calories) ..... 44 minutes (about 4400 steps)
12 oz. soft drink (150 calories)..... 30 minutes (about 3000 steps)
1 orange (60 calories)..... 11 minutes (about 1100 steps)
1 carrot (25 calories) ..... 5 minutes (about 500 steps)

***Guide – 10,000 steps is about 5 miles.**

Of course, walking faster and even jogging will burn more calories. Either way, all foods that we eat are "potential" energy—"potential" meaning we may use it or not. If not, that energy goes right to our hips, thighs and belly. Keep your New Year's resolution on track—dust off the bicycle, get out the in-line skates, and lace up those sneakers and ride, glide, or stride that potential holiday energy away.

Source: Nutritioncouncil.org.

Pedometers:

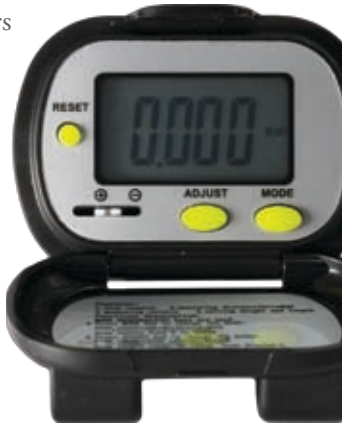
Not Just For Walking Anymore

With the current emphasis on walking 10,000 steps a day, many Americans have bought pedometers to help count those steps. Walking however is not the only way to get exercise, and the pedometer market has expanded to count many of our physical activities.

For swimmers, there's the lap counter—a device about the size of a deck of cards with suction cups on the back. You stick it at one end of the pool and at the end of each lap you press it with your hand and it counts a lap, as well as time between laps.

For cyclists, there is the cadence counter. This device usually attaches to your handlebars with a wire that stretches down to your pedals. As you turn the pedals it will count how many revolutions you make in one minute.

Finally, pedometers are not just for people either—there are "petometers" that actually count the number of steps your dog is getting each day!



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